

Acceptance

by A.H.S. Stories

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Acceptance

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RATING: PG, There's no sex, no violence, and only minor swearing.

CLASSIFICATION: Vignette, Short Story.

SPOILERS: It takes place after Memento Mori and before Gethsemene. That's it. You'll have to read it to find out anything more.

The X-Files - "Acceptance"

by Allison H. Smith

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***** If you copy this, please include all the above info w/it or I will be forced to hunt you down and cry. Please don't, I'm not too good at turning on the water works.*****
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7:00 a.m., Wednesday --- Scully's Apartment, Georgetown

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>Scully lay in bed after turning off her alarm clock. Staring at her

ceiling, she realized that she felt weird this morning. It was kind of a depressed, sickly, withdrawn feeling. She didn't feel sick per se; just ,well, weird. With a sigh she sat up and got out of bed. She didn't feel poorly enough to stay home, she decided as she took her morning shower. <p>

"Damn!" She swore to herself. She couldn't find her car keys. Annoyed, she called a cab, then went down to the street to wait. She checked several times on her way to see that she had everything she needed that day. If only she could remember where she had left her car keys. She glanced down at her watch. 8:35. She was going to be late again. "_Thank God it was still early for the city_", she thought as her cab pulled up in front of her. She quickly got in and gave her directions to the driver.

"Hey lady!", Scully started as the cab driver spoke to her. "Are you feeling o.k.?" he asked kindly.

She nodded distractedly. "Why?" she asked.

"We've been at your stop for a couple minutes now", he said, Gesturing to the J. Edgar Hoover building in front of them.

Startled, Scully looked out the window. "_Great_" she thought. "_I'm losing it_." She quickly paid the driver and got out of the cab. "Sorry" she said as she closed the door. She stood at the curb for a moment, lost in thought, as the cab drove away. Shaking herself slightly, Scully turned and walked into the building and down towards the office she and Mulder shared.

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8:30 a.m. --- J. Edgar Hoover Building, Mulder's Office.

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Mulder sat at his desk. He'd spent most of the early morning there trying to figure out some details in Scully's and his last case. He'd gone over all the files he had, police reports and everything. But he just couldn't explain it. He glanced at his watch for the millionth time that morning. 8:40. Where was Scully? She would have called if she had stayed home that day; unless she couldn't. NO. If something had happened, then he would have been called by the hospital. He reached for the phone thinking maybe she had slept late. Maybe Skinner had told her to choose her hours. God knows none of them had any right to make her come into work after everything that had happened. Mulder thought briefly about the irony that Scully's cancer scared him more than the horrors he faced daily in the X-Files.

8:41 a.m. --- J. Edgar Hoover Building, Mulder's Office

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Scully stood outside the office she shared with Mulder. She could tell he was in the office already, but for some unexplained reason she couldn't bring herself to come in just yet. She had this feeling a lot recently, it was as if everything had changed after her cancer diagnosis. She was more acutely aware of her limited time and found herself wondering each time she went through her routines, doing familiar things, if it was going to be the last time she would do it. Scully took a deep breath and opened the door, walking purposefully

into the office as she had done so often in the morning. Mulder glanced up quickly as the door opened; his hand quickly putting the phone down.

"Scully..." he said, not knowing what else to say. "I... I was, um, just going to call you."

He looked at her and smiled. God, he felt so relieved that she was o.k. He laughed inwardly at how silly he must look to her. Scully looked closely at Mulder, slightly confused by her partner's behavior.

"I couldn't find my car keys this morning, I had to call a cab." Scully said, answering her partner's unspoken question as she sat down at her desk across from him. Their friendship was so close that she knew he would be wondering why she was late. It made her feel secure to know that he would worry about her like that. She could tell he had been going insane before she had come in. She looked at his desk, the numerous files scattered all over it, and his half empty coffee cup sitting in the midst of it all. "Mulder", she said questioningly, "Have you been here all night?"

"No, I uh, couldn't sleep so I came in to finish some of the paperwork on this last case. There's something about it that doesn't seem quite right."

"What parts puzzled you Mulder?" Scully asked, remembering the odd case vividly. At first it had seemed just like an X-File, but as the case had progressed it had looked more and more like a poorly planned hoax. In the end, the local police chief had arrested two men he believed were responsible for murder. She believed that by then it was clear to Mulder and herself that it was a hoax and the men were guilty, not aliens. What on earth could he be having problems with?

"It's silly, I know," Mulder began, "but I don't understand how and why they did it. I mean I understand they wanted to cover up for their crime, but why tell everyone involved that it was aliens, why orchestrate it to such a high degree, as to have the witnesses hypnotized into believing it was aliens. And why call in me? Did they really think the X-Files would give them a solid backing, that I would give them a solid backing?"

Mulder looked questioningly across the desk at his partner, trying to see if she understood what he meant. Scully sat in her chair, thinking about what to say.

"Well Mulder," she said slowly, "I'm not really sure why they chose to go to the degrees they did, but as for calling you in; You have a reputation in some circles as an advocate for the existence of aliens, it wouldn't be difficult to concoct a story to lure you in. The difficult part would be maintaining that story, and that is where they failed. The beings responsible were arrested Mulder. I thought you were already sure of that."

Scully looked closely at Mulder as she finished talking. Something in the way he sat there, not saying anything made her believe that he had come in because he wanted to see her. Mulder looked at Scully, "_She knows_", he thought, "_That I was lying. I wonder if she knows why?_" As their eyes met, it was as if there was a mutual

understanding between them.

"Mulder, I have an appointment with Skinner in a few minutes." She said, changing the subject.

Mulder looked at his partner, internally grateful for the change in subject.

"Do you want me to go with you?" he asked kindly.

For a moment Scully hesitated, wondering if she wanted Mulder to be with her. Only she had to see Skinner, but ...

"Sure Mulder," Scully replied. "I'd like it if you were there."

Mulder grabbed his suit jacket from his chair and put it on as Scully stood waiting by the door. Together they both walked out of the office. Mulder closed the door behind him as he left, grateful that Scully had said yes. He didn't like her facing things alone any more.

9:00 a.m. --- A.D. Skinner's Office, J. Edgar Hoover Building.

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>Mulder and Scully sat in the waiting area outside Skinner's office. His secretary had gone out for lunch a few minutes after their arrival, leaving the two of them alone. Scully could sense that Mulder was curious about her meeting, but would never come out and ask what it was about. They sat in silence for a few minutes waiting for the Assistant Director to see Scully. <p>

"I'm requesting some days off, Mulder." Scully said, by way of explanation.

Mulder nodded slightly, "A sick leave, or just a day, here and there?" He asked.

"Thursdays and Fridays for the next few weeks," she replied. "I, uh." Damn why was this so hard to say? "I'm starting a new kind of radiation therapy. I'll be pretty weak after the treatments, so I need to get the days off." She looked down at her lap, not really knowing what else to say to Mulder.

"When do you start?" Mulder couldn't think of anything else to say. He knew Scully was undergoing treatment for her cancer, but they had never talked about it before, not like this.

"My first treatment is at D.C. General Hospital tonight." Scully's voice had a certain sad twinge to it that Mulder had never heard before.

Before they could continue their conversation, the door across from them opened. A.D. Skinner stood in the doorway and motioned for Scully to come in.

"Agent Scully," he said as he did, "Sorry to keep you waiting."

He glanced briefly at Mulder, but made no mention of his presence.

"I'll wait out here for you." Mulder said softly as Scully stood and followed Skinner into his office.

Scully walked into Skinner's office and stood by his desk as he closed the door behind her. _God, why was she so nervous?_ She had been in this office so many times before, sat with Mulder in the chairs next to her to present their cases to Skinner..._Mulder_. For a fleeting moment, Scully found herself wishing that he was here next to her while she spoke with Skinner. Fingering the cross around her neck, she became aware that Skinner was waiting for her to sit down. She did, searching for how to begin as she did.

"Sir," she began slowly, "I, I came here today to ask for some time off each week...."

As she spoke, Scully felt her confidence rise slightly. She told Skinner about her treatment and the time off she felt she would need to recuperate. Mulder sat in the outer office waiting patiently for his partner. He had no doubt that Skinner would do everything he possibly could to help her. In the past he had had his doubts about his superior, but lately had come to the decision that his boss was being used in the conspiracy just as much as they were. As he sat thinking about everything they had gone through together, the office door opened again, as Scully and Skinner walked out of the office.

"Thank you very much sir." Scully said as she came out.

"Certainly Agent Scully." The director replied briefly, nodding. "If you have any other problems feel free to come see me."

With that, He turned and walked back into his office. Mulder and Scully walked silently out of his office together, pausing to greet his secretary as she returned from her lunch. As they were walking back towards the elevator to their basement office, Mulder remembered a file a friend in forensics had wanted him to look at that morning.

"Uh, Scully," he said quickly. "I'll meet you down there in a few minutes o.k.? I promised Agent Clark I would look at some case files he's working on."

"Sure, Mulder. I'll see you in a little bit."

Scully hit the elevator button as Mulder walked briskly around the corner. She was relieved that Assistant Director Skinner had understood her situation. He had told her that the F.B.I. would be as accomodating as possible with her schedule. He seemed to have changed his opinion of the X-Files and her and Mulder's work. She still didn't completely trust him, after all, he had met with the Cigarette Smoking Man throughout the begining of her partnership with Mulder. Sighing, Scully entered the elevator and pushed the button that would take her down to the basement office she had shared with Mulder for the last four years. Why did she feel like everything was so different?

3:58 p.m., Wednesday --- Mulder's Office

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Mulder was sitting at his desk watching Scully search through her purse. It was the fifth time, he noticed, that she had done it today. She had also searched, he had noticed, under the piles of papers on his desk, the file cabinets, and the small table in the corner. Finally he couldn't contain his curiosity any longer.

"Scully,", he said slowly. "What are you looking for?"

Exasperated, Scully sat down in the chair beside her, scooping the former contents of her purse off Mulder's desk and replacing them in her purse.

"I am trying to find my car keys Mulder." she replied, a strong twinge of bitterness creeping into her voice. "I lost them a couple days ago. I've had to take a cab to and from work. It just keeps slipping my mind to look for them." She glanced at her watch as she spoke. "Shit!" she swore softly to herself.

"What?" Mulder asked. Scully seldom swore, so it must have been something important.

"My treatment session is in 45 minutes Mulder. I'll never be able to get a cab this late in the day." Scully sagged in her seat, feeling very tired and defeated for the first time that day.

Mulder looked closely at his partner. She looked absolutely defeated. Without hesitating he grabbed his jacket, which had found its way to his chair again, and his keys from the desk.

"Come on", he said to Scully. "If we leave now, we can make it through the traffic."

Scully hesitated briefly. She didn't want Mulder to go out of his way for her.

"Mulder", she began. "You don't have to..."

"Nonsense Scully, now come on. I won't let you be late."

Scully got up, checked to make sure she had everything she needed, and walked out of the office with Mulder, who turned off the light and locked the door as he left. As they went to the elevator, he couldn't help but think that no other partners would have done this for each other. Then again, how many people would have to drive their partners to the hospital because they had been given a cancer by the government.

6:15 p.m., Wednesday --- D.C. General Hospital

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Mulder sat in the waiting area outside the cancer wing at the hospital. He hadn't told Scully he was staying. She probably wouldn't have let him. The nurse had told him that it would take a while for him to receive the treatment. She would have to stay at the hospital for a little while, to recover a bit, and then she was free to go home. He felt so

responsible for what had happened to her, he had to stay and help her. Mulder looked up as a nurse approached him.

"Agent Mulder?" she asked uncertainly.

Mulder nodded.

"Miss Scully would like to see you."

"Did someone tell her I was still here?" Mulder asked puzzled.

"No," the nurse replied, smiling. "She said she knew you would stay."

Mulder quickly followed the nurse to the room where Scully was resting after her treatment. As he went in, he glanced at several of the other people there. Many of them were older, most wore scarfs, a few had wigs. One little girl about eight years old lay in a bed at the end of the room, across from Scully. She held a worn stuffed rabbit in her arms. An I.V. stood next to her as she slept. Mulder felt his heart jump, recalling briefly his sister, praying that she never went through what Scully was going through. He walked over to Scully's bedside and sat down next to her. Her eyes were closed, as if she was sleeping, but opened as she became aware someone was there.

"Mulder" she said quietly.

"Hi." he replied, "How are you feeling?"

"Not as bad as I thought I would." Scully admitted. "I want to go home."

Mulder looked over to the nurse, who nodded it was o.k. for Scully to leave.

"I'll get you checked out," he said, "and bring you home."

Mudler stood up and walked out of the room. As he left, he looked one last time at the other patients in the room, so many. It frightened him almost, to think that someone could give a person such a terrible disease.

7:05 p.m. --- Scully's Apartment, Georgetown

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>Mulder fumbled with the key to Scully's apartment, swearing softly until the door opened. He turned on the light switch by her door, and helped Scully in. She shuffled sluggishly into the apartment, and left Mulder to close the door behind her as she sat down on her couch. Slowly she kicked off her shoes and lay back against the couch, closing her eyes. Mulder turned and looked at her from her door. He had never seen her look so weak. He went into her kitchen and poured her a glass of water, bringing it with him as he returned to the living room. He crouched by her, holding the glass.

"Scully," he said softly, "I brought you some water."

Scully opened her eyes and looked at Mulder. Smiling faintly she took the glass and sipped the water cautiously. She felt so sick, even the water tasted terrible. Mulder watched as she sipped the water, he was almost afraid she would be too tired and weak to hold the glass. She put it down on the table suddenly and stood up, unsteadily making her way to the bathroom. Mulder followed her, and stood outside the door as she was sick. He felt so helpless.

"Scully?" he called to her, " Do you want to go back to the hospital?"

"No Mulder, I'll be okay in a little while." she said slowly.

Mulder turned from the bathroom door and walked across the apartment, remembering an old "technique" his mother had used when he was a kid. He found a large bowl in Scully's kitchen and brought it to her bedroom, setting it on the table next to her pillow. He turned back the covers on her bed, and stood to the side as Scully came into the room and laid down. She pulled the covers up around her shoulder's and closed her eyes.

"Thank you Mulder," she whispered.

"Do you want me to stay for a while Scully?" Mulder asked quietly.

"No Mulder, you should go back to work. They'll wonder why you were gone this long."

"I'll be back in the morning to check on you." he said

Mulder turned, preparing to leave the room.

"I wish there was some other treatment Dana, " he said as he turned off her light. "Something that wouldn't put you through this."

Scully reached out for his hand as the light went out.

"It's okay Mulder," she said, "I've accepted it."

The End

>Well, tell me what you think. Be blunt, honest whatever. It's my first fanfic so go for it. I need to learn right! <p>

End
file.